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ABSTRACT

In coordination with training officers, student programming agents, and students, a system was designed that would allow a comparative analysis of nonacademic courses offered by U.S. institutions and international providers of children and youth services, permit students to earn internationally recognized continuing education units, and establish a computerized record system that would include pertinent training course and credit information. Materials were prepared in the practicum for nonacademic training programs that would hold training providers more accountable for offering what they advertise, and a system was designed to ensure that nonacademic study by international providers of child and youth services was recognized through granting internationally recognized credit. Besides the organization of a student nonacademic advisory council, meetings with stakeholders ascertained what was most needed to develop a system for tracking courses taken by international nonacademic students under federal sponsorship. Analysis of the data revealed that the more information given about a course when it was announced, the greater the likelihood of the student and funding agency choosing the best continuing education course to meet the defined student needs. Students were more likely to want to remain lifelong learners when they knew that their nonacademic courses would be recognized internationally. (CK)

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Comparing Course Content and Awarding Credit for Nonacademic Training Programs for International Providers of Child and Youth Services Under Federal Sponsorship

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Cluster 51

A Practicum I Report Presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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Approved:

March 9, 1994
Date of Final Approval of Report

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGMENT iii

TABLES OF CONTENTS. iv

LIST OF TABLES. v

ABSTRACT. vi

Chapter

I INTRODUCTION. 1

Description of Community 1
Worker's Work Setting and Role 3

II STUDY OF THE PROBLEM 5

Problem Description 5
Problem Documentation. 6
Causative Analysis 15
Relationship of the Problem
to the Literature. 16

III ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION
INSTRUMENTS. 22

Goals and Expectations 22
Expected Outcomes. 22
Measurement of Outcomes. 24

IV SOLUTION STRATEGY 26

Discussion and Evaluation of
Solutions 26
Description of Selected Solution. 28
Report of Action Taken. 29

Page

V RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS. 40

Results 41
Discussion. 48
Recommendations 58
Dissemination 60

REFERENCES 61

Appendices

A NONACADEMIC TRAINING PROGRAM ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE 64

B NONACADEMIC STUDENT INFORMATION FORM. 77

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1 Ages of Students Taught. 9
2 Satisfaction with Nonacademic Training Program. 10
3 Training Expectations. 11
4 Actual Training Program versus Advertised Training Program. 11
5 Professional Needs Met by Training 11
6 Expected Time in Present Employment Following Nonacademic Training. 13
7 Importance of Nonacademic Training Certificate to Employer 14

ABSTRACT

Comparing Course Content and Awarding Credit for Nonacademic Training Programs for International Providers of Child and Youth Services Under Federal Sponsorship. Coleman, Carolyn I., 1994: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Nonacademic Training/Continuing Education/International Training/Continuing Education Unit

This practicum was designed to develop a mechanism to compare content of nonacademic courses offered by American institutions to international providers of children and youth services, and to grant students internationally recognized credit upon completion of selected courses. A system was designed, in concert with training officers, student programming agents, and students, which would allow comparative analysis of similar programs, permit students to earn internationally recognized continuing education units, and establish a computerized record system which would include pertinent training course and credit information.

The writer prepared material on recognition for nonacademic training programs which would hold training providers more accountable for offering what they advertise; held meetings with stakeholders to ascertain what was most needed to develop a system for tracking courses taken by international nonacademic students under federal sponsorship; organized a Student Nonacademic Advisory Council; and designed a system to ensure that nonacademic study by international providers of child and youth services was recognized through granting internationally recognized credit.

Analysis of the data revealed that the more information given about a course when it was announced, the greater the likelihood of the student and funding agency choosing the best continuing education course to meet the defined student needs. Students were more likely to want to remain lifelong learners when they knew that their nonacademic courses would be internationally recognized.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The setting for this practicum was a federal agency responsible for partial implementation of the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended, which was the federal legislation governing all aspects of American development and economic support to foreign countries. The charge of the agency was to concentrate solely on developing countries, and all activities contributed to the betterment of the quality of life for individuals and of the overall target country economic structure.

The training program implemented under the FAA was responsible for bringing students to the United States of America, under federal sponsorship, to study in academic and nonacademic programs. The primary goal of the training program was to assist people from developing countries in acquiring the knowledge and resources essential for sustainable development through building economic, political, and social institutions.

Ideally, once students completed their training programs, they had increased skill and knowledge levels, changed attitudes and values, and augmented capacities to

play leadership and catalytic roles in promoting social, community and institutional change in their home countries. The primary purpose of the training program, then, was to create change agents in developing countries.

Predeparture orientation was designed to ensure that students, prior to leaving home, understood how their training, responsibilities, and commitments joined a larger stream of development initiatives to induce sustainable economic, social, and political improvements. Each student came to America on a "J" visa under the auspices of the federal government, and committed to spend at least two years immediately following completion of the training in the labor force of his or her home country.

The average annual budget spent on training activities since 1985 has been approximately $330 million. Approximately 3,265 nonacademic trainees in 1992 were international providers of child and youth services, and concentrated in areas to provide services to their students and clients: education, health, nutrition, and public administration. In 1993, this number had increased to 4,868 being international providers of child and youth services.

The office which was responsible for the central international training program employed 48 people with varying responsibilities. Ten major contractors placed students in academic, nonacademic and private sector training programs. Each program had an "experience America"

component which was designed to provide an opportunity for students to volunteer in and interact with people in various communities. The nonacademic training programs had various elements designed to blend academic or nonacademic studies with social, cultural and political experiences.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer, director of a division within an office which concentrated on the central international training program servicing 112 countries worldwide, advised on policy matters to ensure that guidelines were followed in conceptualizing, designing, implementing and evaluating training activities. She had responsibility for ensuring that international students were placed in appropriate American academic, nonacademic, and private sector to private sector training programs. She also had the duty to solve problems of students, including academic failure, social adjustment and health problems, payment of federal and state taxes, and personal issues surrounding their American stay such as family accompaniment, allowance rates, and infractions of the legal system.

According to the organizational chart, the writer directly supervised eight people: three training placement specialists, a contract liaison specialist, a private sector training specialist, an income tax specialist, and two administrative employees. There were also seven contractors located in the immediate office for whom she had supervisory

responsibility: four accountants, a minority institutions advisor, a women in development advisor, and an administrative assistant. Additionally, there was one staff member who was detailed to the federal agency from a university for a one year period.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

Training was a large part of the foreign assistance program. In 1991, there were 16,360 students under federal sponsorship associated with the FAA: 8,209 in academic and 8,151 in nonacademic training programs. There was almost a 50:50 split between academic and nonacademic training programs. In 1992, there were 14,263 students under federal sponsorship associated with the FAA: 6,620 in academic training and 7,643 in nonacademic training. In 1993, there were 14,382 participants: 5,640 in academic training and 8,742 in nonacademic training programs. The nonacademic training program continued to expand unexpectedly. This expansion caused a problem that the agency needed to but had not addressed.

There was neither a mechanism through which the quality of nonacademic training programs could be measured, nor a mechanism to allow continuity in acknowledging completion of nonacademic courses in ways that were nationally or internationally recognized. Placement contractors and education and training providers could not be held accountable for the quality of nonacademic programs. Further, there was not a mechanism for assessing or ensuring

quality of nonacademic training programs.

The existing internal computerized student tracking system reflected neither accurate data concerning training location nor the actual number of training hours completed. Some evaluations, written communications from overseas federal offices, and conversations with students indicated student dissatisfaction with selected programs.

The problem was: There was no mechanism used to compare content of continuing education courses offered to international providers of child and youth services, or to give credit to students who completed specific training programs.

Problem Documentation

Students, training providers, and placement contractors were requested to complete questionnaires at the end of each training program. This was the methodology employed to evaluate the appropriateness, quality and impact of training. Students themselves were one of the best sources of meaningful data, as their thoughts, feelings, and suggestions were used to assess the achievement of the overall program goals and objectives and to highlight specific good or troublesome aspects of the training program. Through this mechanism, the funding institution was able to determine specific aspects of the training experience that proceeded well or needed improvement. Selected survey instruments for nonacademic training are

contained in Appendix A.

The evaluation instrument used for nonacademic students was a questionnaire containing 65 questions with a mixture of yes/no, rating scales, categorical, and open-ended questions. It was these responses that were used consistently by the management of the sponsoring office to determine program effectiveness, training provider competence, and what programmatic changes were needed.

The writer analyzed a sample of 600 nonacademic student exit questionnaires to determine what problems recurred most often. The responses, which evaluated nonacademic programs offered between February 1992 and February 1993, were entered into the evaluation database. They were chosen based on two criteria: whether the student would have teaching or working with students as a job responsibility upon return to the home country, and geographic region representation. From the data, 120 responses from each of five geographical regions were randomly selected for inclusion in the practicum problem determination. Ten questions were chosen to determine whether the perceived problem actually existed.

Working With Children and Youth

The students selected for the representative sampling of those who were in the areas of education, health, nutrition, and public administration worked with different age children and youth as indicated in Table 1. The writer

was able to ensure that the population planned to return to the same or similar job responsibilities upon return home. This was important because the sample provided information from those enrolled in nonacademic training courses in different areas, and the writer wanted to be sure that the training taken was not to prepare students for alternative employment opportunities immediately.

Table 1

Ages of Students Taught

< 5 YEARS	5 - 10 YEARS	11 - 15 YEARS	16 - 18 YEARS	> 18 YEARS
102	188	209	76	15

n = 590

As students worked with multiple levels of age groups when they returned to their countries, their target students were classified as another set of direct beneficiaries of the nonacademic training program. The heaviest concentration was on students who would work with students up to 15 years of age.

Program Satisfaction

As a determination of the effectiveness of the training program, the writer looked at program satisfaction as a indication of whether the students received what they thought they were going to acquire and what they saw themselves as needing. There was no way to determine how

the students determined "satisfaction," but it was operationalized herein as a measure of having major requirements fulfilled.

Background information provided to all potential students included a description of the course, school or company offering the training, geographical location, and general information on the climate of the area. Table 2 shows the distribution of responses which did establish that there was measurable dissatisfaction with the programs in which these nonacademic students were enrolled.

Table 2

Satisfaction with Nonacademic Training Program

Fully Pleased 1	2	3	4	5	6	**Not Pleased** 7
108	102	101	87	49	72	68

n = 587

Added to the lack of total satisfaction with the program was the question of whether training expectations had been met. No matter how the "expectations" were defined and formed, nonacademic training programs for the sample group were different from what was anticipated, advertised, or needed in a sufficient number of cases to warrant management attention. Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5 present the questionnaire results.

Table 3

Training Expectations

Fully Met 1	2	3	4	5	6	Not Met 7
78	105	120	2	101	69	58

n = 533

The low response rate on this question indicated that there may have been some difficulty in interpreting "expectations" as well as the cultural sensitivity of admitting a misunderstanding. It may also have indicated an unwillingness to imply to the sponsor that expectation were unmet as it could be interpreted as an indication of gratitude. It is important to note that there were 67 students who did not provide a response to this question.

Table 4

Actual Training Program versus Advertised Training Program

SAME	WITH SLIGHT MODIFICATIONS	WITH MANY MODIFICATIONS	DIFFERENT
98	171	236	89

n = 594

Table 5

Professional Needs Met by Training

Fully Met 1	2	3	4	5	6	Not Met 7
106	67	102	146	117	12	43

n = 593

These data substantiate that there were some problems with course quality. Again, this was an area for managerial concern and action.

Employment Changes

It had been generally assumed that nonacademic students returned to their places of employment on a long term basis, thus immediately using the skills acquired through the American training programs. As shown in Table 6, data confirmed that many of the students did not expect to stay with the employing company. This was reinforced because of 596 respondents, 307 anticipated job changes, while 289 did not. Further, 363 of 591 respondents indicated that anticipated a change in present job responsibilities as a result of their training, while 228 did not expect any changes. These data were important because they contradicted major assumptions of nonacademic training, namely that the employer was making a commitment in endorsing the training program of the student and that the home company would reap the immediate and long-term benefits of increased skills, aggrandized knowledge levels, and fresh international exposure. As this was not necessarily true, it suggested that it may be advantageous for management to start evaluating more comprehensive courses or sets of courses that offer a blend of skills and lessons more applicable to broader settings. For example, if a child nutrition worker was going to leave a school dietary

department to work in health care, it may be advantageous for the student to have also had a course that addressed the relationship among child nutrition, child development, and overall health issues instead of one which was narrow and solely stressed nutritional needs and intake, and food growing, preservation, storage and preparation practices.

Table 6

Expected Time in Present Employment Following Nonacademic Training

< 3 - 6 MONTHS	< 7 - 9 MONTHS	< 10 - 12 MONTHS	> YEAR
372	17	134	76

n = 599

Certificates of completion

The funding agency had not thought it important to grant certificates of successful completion to nonacademic students. The operating procedure had been that if the training facility awarded a certificate, the student could accept. Data show that it was important for students to receive certificates, and it was also consequential to employers. In many countries, it was a status symbol to have certificates on display in the office as an international training statement. Of 600 respondents, 162 indicated that they had received certificates and 438 said that they had not.

Table 7 provides responses to the question of the

importance of certificates of completion of nonacademic training to employers. The initial assumption, contradicted by these data, had been that certificates were not important and, if so, only to the student.

Table 7

Importance of Nonacademic Training Certificate to Employer

Very Important 1	2	3	4	5	6	Not Important 7
262	42	67	105	96	17	8

n = 597

Based on these responses, the writer was able to document that the practicum problem did exist within the nonacademic training program. There was a discrepancy between what was needed and what was offered; there was a problem with quality control from training providers; and students would like to have certificates which attested that they had completed nonacademic training in America. There were additional problems. A review of the computerized database tracking system revealed that management and major policy decisions on nonacademic training programs could not be based on consistent or concrete historical information. There was not a mechanism in place which established records or transcripts for nonacademic students. There was no way to provide information on how many or who has been enrolled in the same

or related nonacademic course(s). Invoices from training facilities were paid as submitted without knowing that all included services had been rendered because there was no operative cross check mechanism.

The writer also held interviews with 15 students. These were open-ended discussions which centered around how the nonacademic training program, from their perspectives, could be made more effective. Cultural differences between what international and American students needed from a nonacademic training program were discussed. Among other suggestions, interviewees wanted to establish training records to add credibility to their programs as well as the prestige element that would accrue upon return to the home setting. They also wanted a "declaration of training" that could be displayed and let all who entered their offices know that they had successfully completed training in an American program.

Causative Analysis

The funding agency concentrated on tracking academic students because prior to 1992, most students were in academic programs and that was where the majority of the funding was spent. In 1992 and 1993, the nonacademic program grew faster than had been anticipated and became the cornerstone of the overall training program. It had been falsely assumed that nonacademic training was directly related to present employment and that students completed

training and returned to the same work setting.

Activities for students in nonacademic training programs had basically ended once they returned to their home countries. The short duration of nonacademic training programs did not foster extensive monitoring to ensure quality. Contractual reporting requirements for programming agents of nonacademic students had not been thorough which resulted in the funding agency having an incomplete database.

The average cost of nonacademic training could not be determined because there was not a way to judge how many contact hours of training were charged for prepackaged programs. Student complaints about various nonacademic training providers were not consistently conveyed to the sponsoring agent or investigated if less than ten sponsored students were enrolled in the program.

There was not emphasis placed on the training provider and what they offered as opposed to what they advertised. They had not been held to a standard, which resulted in a nonacademic training program lacking quality control.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

A review of the literature revealed the importance of nonacademic training, and the generalizability of some of the problems encountered in qualifying and quantifying nonacademic training programs. There was, however, a shortage of information on the applicability of nonacademic

training in the international arena.

Council on the Continuing Education Unit (1984) presented ways to identify standards, criteria and guidelines for continuing education and training, and established a set of standards for continuing education and training programs. The International Association for Continuing Education and Training (1986) gave a history of and guidelines for applying the continuing education concept to nonacademic training programs. There were internationally accepted standards for nonacademic training courses, and students were granted one continuing education unit for each ten contact hours of course participation.

Tallman (1989) maintained that continuing education was important to help assure practitioner competence. Steps in establishing a climate for nonacademic training factors and for a successful continuing professional education program were discussed by Azzaretto (1984), who later (1990) espoused three goals for continuing education: assistance in maintaining professional knowledge and skills; preparation for assuming new responsibilities or changing career paths; and broadening the range of knowledge and skills. He discussed steps in establishing a climate for nonacademic training and factors for a successful continuing professional education program.

Schafer (1983) presented continuing education as the key to profitability and productivity to ensure that the

labor force remained abreast of subject areas in a quickly changing environment. The increasing difficulty of effective delivery of nonacademic training due to collaboration needed among diverse agencies and institutions was examined by Hohmann (1985). According to Houle (1980), quality control and programmatic effectiveness in continuing education brought policymakers, educators, and consumers together as primary stakeholders.

Burnham (1986) offered a process through which continuing education administrators can quantifiably measure courses, registration, costs, and student hours. The selected problems of continuing education units in terms of the time taken to complete all instruction, organizational politics, and different organizational outlooks and culture, were examined by Lesage (1988).

Brooks (1989) submitted that awarding continuing education units for nonacademic training offered ongoing benefits at little cost, and that receiving credit and transcripts served as personal incentives for lifelong learning. Wolf and Waldron (1986) viewed continuing education as a fragmented field that lacked leadership due to the absence of a single implementation model. They offered an econometric model to bring order to the fragmented parts of nonacademic training.

Several conclusions were drawn from the review of the literature. The importance of nonacademic training was

continuing to grow, and regulation of standards had become increasingly important. According to the Council on the Continuing Education Unit and the International Association for Continuing Education and Training, nonacademic training standards were initially determined by training sponsors and providers. This yielded training programs that were neither consistent nor credible.

Nonacademic training was initially most popular in the health fields as a way to document continuing qualification for receiving licensure, recertification, or registration. There was difficulty in obtaining agreement on a standard of quality applicable across diverse fields as nonacademic training expanded (Wolf and Waldron, 1986). Though not observed by all nonacademic training provides, the International Association for Continuing Education and Training has established guidelines to provide consumers (learners and purchasers of training) a way to compare different training courses in terms of number of hours and training.

Program criteria for determining quality of nonacademic training included needs identification; learning outcomes; instruction; content and methodology; requirements for satisfactory completion; assessment of learning outcomes, and program evaluation. Not all training programs have used this quality control approach (Houle, 1980), and many providers of nonacademic training programs did not certify

the number of hours students were in learning formats (Burnham, 1986). Until recently, there had not been a formal body that has certified the quality of nonacademic training, and membership for training providers in professional organizations had been elective (International Association for Continuing Education and Training, 1986).

Informal reports, notes to the file, and interoffice correspondence revealed concrete causes of the problem from an office perspective. There were controversies regarding how to track nonacademic education because, when likened to academic programs, and students were only in America for relatively short periods of time and the training cost was comparatively low.

Due to the ratio of academic to nonacademic students, there was little concern assigned to certifying the quality of nonacademic education. Not much emphasis was placed on encouraging students to become lifetime learners through expanded nonacademic education, so the short-term objective of getting students trained and back to their countries to use the training became the single goal.

Funding expenditures on nonacademic education were low enough not to be classified into subject areas or training units. Priority was placed on tracking academic training records as opposed to nonacademic because most students were in academic programs. The growth of nonacademic training

placed different demands on accountability issues for the entire training program.

There were also questions on the purposes of training imparted through the nonacademic program. The funding agency was not sure whether the program was being used to help participants increase present job skills or to prepare them to assume totally different job responsibilities.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The goal of this practicum was to adopt internationally recognized standards to compare standardized information about continuing education courses offered to international providers of child and youth services, and to give credit to sponsored students who complete training programs.

Expected Outcomes

The following goals and outcomes were projected for this practicum.

Outcome number 1

The funding agency will have become a certified program provider of internationally recognized continuing education units.

Outcome number 2

Training officers will be informed by cable that students in nonacademic training programs will receive internationally recognized continuing education units.

Outcome number 3

Potential training providers will be required to furnish like information on nonacademic courses offered in the fields of education, health, nutrition and public administration. Information will include: name of

provider, address, telephone, contact person, title of course, course description, dates offered, cost (tuition, housing, materials and fees), number of student contact training hours, prerequisite knowledge and experience, and application deadline date. This information will be required before their training program is announced worldwide by cable to all overseas missions. Major placement contractors will be notified by letter to inform all potential training providers of this implementation change.

Outcome number 4

Training officers will receive a brief cabled description of course content and the total number of hours students will be in class for each nonacademic course offered. This will provide a basis for comparing offerings to determine which nonacademic course best meets the identified student needs.

Outcome number 5

A tracking system will be established for education, health, nutrition and public administration nonacademic courses which will enter a nonacademic student information form as attached in Appendix B.

Outcome number 6

Students in child and youth related courses will receive internationally recognized credit based on the number of contact hours in each course. Criteria will be

those established by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training.

Students will receive certificates which acknowledge the course(s) taken, training provider, number of credits received, and dates of training.

Measurement of Outcomes

The writer determined that she would use the following criteria to measure the outcomes of this practicum.

1. The funding agency would become a certified grantor of credits for nonacademic training programs and would have professional membership in an appropriate association.
2. Approximately one hundred training officers (stationed in America and in overseas offices) would have been notified of the program to grant credit to students in nonacademic programs in the areas of education, health, nutrition, and public administration who are international providers of services to children and youth.
3. Five course announcements for upcoming nonacademic training courses in the areas of education, health, nutrition and public administration would furnish the name of the training provider, address, telephone, contact person, title of course, course description, dates offered, cost (tuition, housing, materials and fees), number of

student contact training hours.

4. One computerized student information data system would be modified to record the following information on students in nonacademic training in the areas of education, health, nutrition and public administration: student name; address; country; student number; employer; title of course; training provider; dates of training; and credits earned. This information would be recorded in the revised database.
5. Thirty students in children and youth related courses would receive internationally recognized credit based on the number of contact hours in each course. This would be proven through the database of enrollment.
6. Thirty students would receive certificates which acknowledge the course(s) taken, training provider, number of credits received, and dates of training.
7. Ten of fifteen student evaluations of nonacademic training would show satisfaction with courses and that the student knew what to expect from the course prior to coming to America. This will be documented through the nonacademic student exit questionnaire.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The practicum problem was: There was no mechanism used to compare content of continuing education courses offered to international providers of child and youth services, or to give credit to students who completed specific training programs.

The review of the literature revealed information which was beneficial in formulating possible solutions to the problem. The writer cited several sources in documenting the existence of internationally recognized standards which provided a mechanism to compare content of selected nonacademic training courses and granting credit for those students who completed programs.

Continuing education helps ensure ongoing professional competence (Tallman, 1989). The Council on the Continuing Education Unit developed internationally recognized minimum criteria for judging the quality of nonacademic training programs and number of contact hours. Criteria for judging nonacademic training courses were divided into five major categories: learning needs, learning outcomes, learning experiences, assessment of learning outcomes, and

administration (International Association for Continuing Education and Training, 1986).

Schafer (1983) maintained that the use of nonacademic courses and credits is growing. Accumulating nonacademic credit was a means for encouraging lifetime learning through personal recognition, professional certification, and employment improvement for upgrading and promotion (Brooks, 1989).

The writer generated several ideas which could provide possible solutions to the identified problem. First, information gathered from other federal government agencies showed how their international training programs were implemented. This information allowed the writer to determine whether there was an overall federal methodology that could be readily adopted.

Internationally recognized standards for nonacademic training programs could be adopted by the sponsoring agency as the guiding principles for quality assessments and determining how students can earn continuing education credits.

Potential training providers of courses in education, health, nutrition and public administration could be required to demonstrate that they have met minimum internationally recognized standards prior to enrolling trainees.

Placement contractors could be required to advertise

and enroll students only in those programs for education, health, nutrition and public administration that have been certified by providers as meeting a set of internationally recognized standards.

Like information could be provided on all courses to overseas federal offices so the more informed decisions may be made among competing nonacademic training courses.

An expanded tracking system on target nonacademic students could be established and incorporated into the existing computerized database. A certificate could be given to nonacademic students certifying program completion, and citing the course name, dates of training, training provider, and the number of continuing education units earned.

Description of Selected Solutions

In reviewing the literature concentrating on nonacademic courses and the importance of nonacademic training, the writer determined that there were internationally recognized quality standards for nonacademic training programs. A mechanism existed which held training providers to a standard. This mechanism also granted credit to students who completed nonacademic training which allowed a transcript to be established. This mechanism was not, however, being used by the sponsoring agency.

As a manager, the writer chose to concentrate on modifying implementation of the existing nonacademic program

to allow informed decision making, add accountability for training providers and programmers, and track and reward students who were international providers of services for children and youth. The writer knew that it was important to add a quality dimension to the federally-sponsored international nonacademic training program to ensure that students received choice training in America. Practicum implementation was used as a management tool to increase accountability of the nonacademic training program.

Report of Action Taken

To solve the identified problem of the expanding nonacademic training program, the writer developed a calendar which included the following activities.

Month 1, Week 1

The writer met with the training officers for Africa, Asia/Near East, Europe/Newly Independent States, and Latin America and Caribbean regions to explain the centrally-managed international nonacademic training program and selected problems which had been consistently encountered. She used data to document the magnitude of the practicum problem, and to show that the problems were applicable to all geographical regions. Meeting participants were given handouts of the information presented.

Feedback was solicited from training officers on the benefits and problems of nonacademic training for overseas federal offices, employers, students, placement contractors,

and training providers. Information generated was recorded for future reference.

The role of the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET), and the internationally recognized criteria for granting credits to students were explained. A history of IACET was offered, and a listing of federal agencies and private sector firms who were members was distributed. Training officers endorsed the concept that the funding agency should become a member of IACET and pay dues for one year.

The writer met with representatives of ten major programming agents to discuss the nonacademic training program and solicit input for: (1) how the system could be restructured to allow stakeholders to compare content of related continuing education courses, and (2) how internationally recognizable credit could be given to students who complete their programs. Programming agents were notified of what additional information should be sought from training providers of nonacademic courses chosen to be included in the international training program.

The writer determined how many students who were international providers of child and youth services would be in the immediate geographical area during the practicum implementation period. She reviewed initial training applications to ascertain what their job responsibilities were, where they worked, and how many years of professional

experience they had. She selected fifteen students: three each from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, and Near East. There were no students who would be enrolled in nonacademic training courses in the target fields from the Newly Independent States section of Europe.

The writer met with selected students individually to explain the practicum process and how their input could be used to help strengthen the overall nonacademic training program. From the pool of 15, ten students were chosen and accepted the invitation to constitute the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council. The concept of continuing education units was introduced to each student during the individual meetings.

Month 1, Week 2

The writer drafted a document to announce the practicum problem concept to overseas offices and to alert them to a new format for announcing upcoming nonacademic courses. The document was circulated to all training officers who had attended the initial meeting for clearance prior to dispatch. Suggested changes were incorporated, and the document was sent to 112 countries worldwide.

Input was invited from overseas training officers on what additional information would be needed to help them make decisions among offered courses. They were given a two week period in which to submit additional suggestions.

The writer met with the Student Nonacademic Advisory

Council at a local university for the first time as a group. Initial activities allowed them to get to know and learn limited information about each other. This fostered "group identification."

The focus of the initial meeting was on how they chose or were chosen for their nonacademic training course. They listed information that they felt they needed prior to making a decision among competing nonacademic training courses that were offered in a relatively close time span. The concept of continuing education units was fully discussed as well as information that had been generated from meetings with training officers and training programming agents.

Students exchanged contact information so that they could stay in touch outside of the Council meetings. In addition to what the writer had prepared and distributed which included name, nationality, profession, nonacademic training course being attended, address, and telephone number, students shared hobbies, major joys and fears surrounding the training experience, and what they wanted to do socially and culturally prior to leaving America.

Month 1, Week 3

The writer reviewed the existing computerized student tracking database and changes were made to allow more information to be collected systematically on each student. Consultations were held with the chief of the statistical

and analysis branch of the responsible office. The writer explained what additional information was needed in the computerized tracking database to reflect fully course information on the nonacademic training program. This included the name of the course attended; training provider; training location; dates of training; and number of continuing education units earned. A copy of the revised information sheet was forwarded to the ten major programming agents.

The writer began to analyze responses received from 84 of the 112 overseas training officers on the practicum concept and its usefulness and practicality as related to the respective countries. Responses were tabulated regionally.

Month 1, Week 4

Guidance was issued to ten major programming agents as to what nonacademic training program announcement cables should state about course content and the number of contact participant hours. Each contractor was invited to call the writer if there were any questions.

The writer continued analysis of the responses from the training officers located in countries overseas.

Month 2, Week 5

The writer met with the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council to get assessments of their individual training programs. They shared the progress they had made in terms

of adjusting to American life, and what they had learned in class. This was compared to what they had thought the course content would be prior to their arrival in America.

The writer responded to inquires and suggestions received from training officers in various countries. She also responded through electronic mail to some of the concepts advanced which were outside of the practicum problem.

The writer began to authorize only announcements of courses in the areas of education, health, nutrition, and public administration, which provided information on the contact hours for each course and whether the training provider was a certified grantor of continuing education units.

Month 2, Week 6

Based on responses, the writer chose one overseas office which had expressed great interest in the practicum concept and with which she could communicate through electronic mail. The universe was narrowed to a country with a time difference of not greater than six hours to increase the likelihood of having messages answered the same day or at least by opening of business the following day. A country in the Near East was chosen, and there was a representative from that country on the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council.

The training officer shared information on why that

nonacademic program had grown faster than the academic program, and what information employers usually asked prior to consenting to the release of an employee for a specified time period to receive nonacademic training in America.

The training officer in that country also shared notes from debriefings held with students who had returned from their nonacademic training programs. Information gathered from this source was generated from interviews held with the funding agency within one week of return to their country, so it was based on recent experiences.

A member of the staff in which the writer was located went to the cooperating country on a temporary assignment. She handcarried a questionnaire that guided her interviews of three participants who were international providers of child and youth services, and who had returned to their work settings between four and six months earlier after completing relevant nonacademic training courses in America.

She also interviewed one employer to ascertain what differences he had noticed in the employee stationed in his company six months after returning from nonacademic training.

The writer received extensive notes from the overseas interviews via panafax and electronic mail.

Month 2, Week 7

The writer met with the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council to discuss their opinions of the importance of

continuing education in their professional settings at home. Discussion centered on what the student expected to be different immediately, within six months, and within one year after returning to the workplace.

The writer prepared certificates for dissemination to students. These certificates allowed space for the name of the student, training course and location, dates of training, and nonacademic credits earned.

The writer met with training officers for Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Near East. She shared what had been learned during the practicum thus far, and responded to questions. This meeting revolved around the input received from overseas officers and members of the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council.

The draft certificate was endorsed by the training officers to be received by nonacademic students upon completion of their programs.

Month 2, Week 8

The writer evaluated the practicum process and the impact it was having and could have on the overall nonacademic training program, not just for those students who were international providers of child and youth services. Training officers, programming agents, and members of the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council had agreed that the concept of ensuring program quality, maintaining transcripts, and granting continuing education

units should be expanded to include all students in nonacademic training programs.

The writer met with the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council. The meeting centered on the progress of their individual training programs and their applicability to their professional settings. Discrepancies between what was being offered and what was advertised were also discussed. The question of how expectations of the individual courses were formed prior to departing their home countries was discussed in detail, as well as how those expectations had been changed since beginning the training program.

Month 3, Week 9

The writer held an unstructured meeting with the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council. Previous meetings had been structured around topics, but this meeting was an opportunity for the Council members to ask the writer about various aspects of American life. Students had questions primarily about crime, race relations, open expression of opinions in various settings, and the importance of education. The students decided on one culminating event for the Council.

The writer learned that in spite of the funding agency having been accepted as a member of the International Association for Continuing Education and Training, there were no funds available at the time with which to pay the membership dues. This was due to the change in the federal

fiscal year and the allocation of operational year budget funds to various federal agencies.

Month 3, Week 10

The writer developed a systematic reporting system which would allow training officers stationed in America and those overseas to receive a quarterly report on the nonacademic courses in which students from their respective countries has been enrolled, the number of nonacademic credits that had been earned, and the number of credits that had not been earned by individual students due to not attending portions of the courses.

The writer met with the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council and presented the draft reporting system. Students had an opportunity to discuss the Freedom of Information Act, which only applies to Americans, and whether they felt disclosure of any of the information in the database could be detrimental to them. The Student Nonacademic Advisory Council felt that information should be released only at the written request of the participant. It was decided that students would be given copies of their database records and it would be up to them to distribute as they saw fit.

Month 3, Week 11

The writer summarized practicum findings and compared actual implementation to the original plan. She documented successes, problems encountered, and unexpected results. The writer also prepared for the final week of

implementation and presentation of findings to stakeholders.

The Student Nonacademic Advisory Council met to review what Council membership had meant to them, to discuss what they had learned, and to evaluate the experience as a whole.

Month 3, Week 12

The writer presented the practicum findings to stakeholders. This included training officers for Africa, Asia/Near East, Europe/Newly Independent States, and Latin American and the Caribbean, and managers of technical projects which held training components for international providers of child and youth services. A meeting was also held with representatives of the ten major nonacademic student programming agents.

The culminating meeting with the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council was held, and the writer took the Council to dinner at a restaurant specializing in international food. Discussion centered around what the international nonacademic training experience, cultural experience, and Council participation had meant to them, and how they planned to use their newly acquired knowledge and skills in their professions at the end of the respective training programs.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The practicum addressed the problem of a federal agency having neither a mechanism to compare content of continuing education courses offered to international providers of child and youth services, nor a way to give credit to students who had completed specific training courses. The results of each of the six anticipated outcomes are discussed below.

Outcome number 1

Anticipated: The funding agency will have become a certified program provider of internationally recognized continuing education units.

Results: The funding agency made application to the International Association for Continuing Education and Training, and was accepted for membership. The international nonacademic training program offered was fully explained and deemed to be a quality program. The federal system was changed at that point because it could then be a grantor of continuing education units for nonacademic programs.

The funding agency did not, however, pay membership dues during the practicum implementation period. Implementation took place during a time of fiscal year budget uncertainty, and membership dues were not paid. It remains a line item for the future budget cycle.

Training providers had to be able to certify that what they were advertising was indeed what was offered in their course. This put much more responsibility on the programming agents, who recommended the courses, and the training providers, who did the training. The practicum process added more accountability to the nonacademic training program for international providers of child and youth services.

Outcome number 2

Anticipated: Training officers will be informed by cable that students in nonacademic training programs will receive internationally recognized continuing education units.

Results: Two separate cables were sent to 112 different countries region announcing the idea that the nonacademic training program for providers of child and youth services could be made more accountable. Input was solicited of ways to improve the nonacademic training program. Managers were informed that like information on various courses could be provided to allow them to make more managerially appropriate decisions.

The cables to the training officers in overseas posts were drafted by the writer but had to be cleared by those regional bureau training officers stationed at central headquarters prior t dispatch authorization. In order to get the necessary clearances, training officers had to understand the entire nonacademic training program. The writer held meetings with the training officers to explain the benefits of quality assurance to students, the sponsoring agency, placement contractors, and training providers. The continuing education unit was discussed from a historical perspective, starting with the 1968 when the first task force on nonacademic education was established, and ending with 1990 when the International Association for Continuing Education and Training was established. Providers of continuing education units include 409 organizations; 180 individual businesses; 16 international training organizations; and 17 government agencies.

The initial course announcement would tell how many classroom contact hours comprised each course. Based on the number of hours the student actually attended the course, the number of credits earned could be determined. Training officers in overseas posts could determine whether a student had attended all course sessions based on the number of credits earned.

The major benefits of the quality assurance program for students were cited as being quality programs, certificates

that document accomplishment, access to transcripts, evidence of professional development, and upward mobility. They could also be more assured that they were selecting and being selected for the most appropriate course. The funding agency had greater control over what nonacademic programs were advertised and in which students enrolled. Placement contractors would benefit by having providers certify what their program included prior to rendering training. Training providers benefitted from having students selected who are interested in their programs, and by competing only with vendors who certify the quality of their programs.

Outcome number 3

Anticipated: Potential training providers will be required to furnish like information on nonacademic courses offered in the fields of education, health, nutrition and public administration. Information will include: name of provider, address, telephone, contact person, title of course, course description, dates offered, cost (tuition, housing, materials and fees), number of student contact training hours, prerequisite knowledge and experience, and application deadline date. This information will be required before their training program is announced worldwide by cable to all overseas missions. Major placement contractors will be notified by letter to inform all potential training providers of this implementation change.

Results: Training vendors were notified that student assessments of nonacademic courses had shown that not all courses were offering what was advertised. In an effort to ensure that the federally funded, international nonacademic training program was the best it could be, more information was required on potential courses.

Training providers were given a form to fill out about each course they wished to have announced worldwide. This information was more extensive than what had been previously required, and ensured that the training placement contractor knew about the announced course. Much more responsibility was also placed on vendors, as they had to be sure that what they advertised was what they offered.

Outcome number 4

Anticipated: Training officers will receive a brief cabled description of course content and the total number of hours students will be in class for each nonacademic course offered. This will provide a basis for comparing offerings to determine which nonacademic course best meets the identified student needs.

Results: Cabled course announcements contained more information than previously transmitted. Concentration was placed on specifics of contact hours, field trips, topics to be covered, and cost.

Teacher-student contact hours were used to determine the number of continuing education units that could be

earned from each course: one unit signified ten contact hours. Training officers were able to determine readily how much of a course was independent study, and, based on the student self-assessments, whether the structure was one in which the student may excel.

Field trips were enumerated so training officers could let potential students know how much travel would be involved. Previous nonacademic students had indicated dissatisfaction about having to move often during a training program when they did not know that such would be necessary. This information was used to help determine which students would welcome the opportunity to see more places in America as opposed to those who wanted training rendered in close proximity of one training location.

Topic coverage was important so potential students could determine whether the topics would be of interest or professional help to them. This also helped clarify the names of courses and brought into sharper focus what the course would encompass.

The financial data and course content information allowed a basis for making informed, management decisions. Cost factor must be considered when determining the best training course. At initial glance, for example, a nonacademic training course with a tuition of $2,000.00 may not appear to be more cost effective than one costing $1,800.00. But, when one is able to see what will be

offered and the number of scheduled teacher-student contact hours, the more expensive program becomes more cost effective and a better economic choice. It may also be a course for which a discount could be offered if a certain number of students enrolled.

Outcome number 5

Anticipated: A tracking system will be established for education, health, nutrition and public administration nonacademic courses which will enter a nonacademic student information form as attached in Appendix B.

Results: The existing tracking system was revised to include additional data elements. The electronic transfer of data made record updating simple. Contractors not using electronic transfer were able to submit a paper copy of the report and the data entry was done by the funding agency.

The continuing education units were awarded by the training provider and recorded in the system of the funding agency. This allowed the establishment of an international transcript. Training providers who could grant continuing education units were encouraged to do so for the first time since the units and information would be used on behalf of the students.

Outcome number 6

Anticipated: Students in child and youth related courses will receive internationally recognized credit based on the number of contact hours in each course. Criteria

will be those established by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training.

Students will receive certificates which acknowledge the course(s) taken, training provider, number of credits received, and dates of training.

Results: Following the standards set by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training, 86 students in nonacademic courses in the areas of education, health, nutrition, and public administration received a total of 1,180 continuing education units, an average of 13 credits each.

Fifty-eight students received certificates from the training providers which did record the course title, training provider, number of continuing education units, and dates of training. This allowed the students to have a certificate to display upon return to their home countries and provided them an incentive to want to earn more certificates.

No students received certificates from the funding institution since it had not officially joined the International Association for Continuing Education and Training. The process, however, was put in place during the practicum and the funder was accepted for Association membership.

A review of 78 completed nonacademic student exit questionnaire revealed that on a scale of one to seven, with

one indicating that they were fully pleased with their training program, 63 gave a one or two rating.

Discussion

Practicum implementation went much the way the writer had anticipated. As implementation progressed, the need for assuring quality of nonacademic programs became increasingly apparent. Houle (1980) had postulated that quality control and programmatic effectiveness in nonacademic training brought policymakers, educators, and consumers together as primary stakeholders. This practicum underscored his findings.

Practicum implementation did not place in the timeframe the writer had anticipated. Working in a federal agency during an election year meant that time had to be taken to determine what the future direction of the federally funded international training program would be. Once all prerequisites for practicum implementation had been approved, it meant that implementation had to span two different fiscal years. Funding was very scarce at the end of one fiscal year and the operational year budget for the next fiscal year was not received during the implementation period to allow payment of membership dues in the International Association of Continuing Education and Training. The funding agency was approved for membership, however, and this action meant that the change the writer sought during practicum implementation had been realized.

Training officers in overseas posts were more flexible than placement contractors initially to the idea of establishing a quality control mechanism for nonacademic training. Training officers recognized the management potential of instituting such a program, but wanted it for all fields of study as opposed to only those who were international providers of child and youth services. They felt it would create less confusion with host country counterparts and less competition among potential students if all nonacademic trainees were given the same credit and had a transcript established. While this was outside the practicum concept, it did serve as concept validation.

The interest of training officers also endorsed what Tallman (1989) and Azzaretto (1984, 1990) had said about the importance of continuing education. They viewed the process as having little additional costs, as Brooks advanced in 1989, and one that would add an element of managerial control. They also embraced the ways the Council on the Continuing Education Unit (1984) presented to identify standards, criteria and guidelines for nonacademic training programs. Training officers wanted to increase their managerial competence and accountability. Being so far removed from the actual training site meant that they were not at liberty to simply call a potential provider to get more information on their program.

Wolf and Waldron (1986) had presented continuing

education as a fragmented field, and Lesage (1988) had examined the time taken to complete all of the requirements to certify the quality of a program. Training placement contractors and providers were most concerned about these points that had been raised in the literature. While the writer never reached an impasse with either group, they were strong in voicing their opinions that the nonacademic training program was working and should be left alone: it was not broken, and did not need fixing. The writer maintained that students had pointed out major flaws that should be addressed before the nonacademic program was indeed broken.

Training placement contractors were cooperative in the process. The writer is not sure that the same level of cooperation would have been displayed if there had not been an active request for proposals for securing the services of a placement contractor for a five year period. Once that contract was let, however, there was less interest shown by some contractors in modifying their internal computerized reporting systems.

The practicum provided an avenue that allowed managers to focus on the changes that had taken place in the overall training program. Few had taken the time to concentrate on the academic/nonacademic breakdown of training statistics instead of looking only at overall numbers. For example, nonacademic training surpassed academic training in Latin

America and the Caribbean, and Europe and Newly Independent States, and was split approximately in half for Asia and the Near East. Africa was the only region which maintained more academic than nonacademic students in 1992 and 1993.

Establishment of the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council and having it comprised of a gender and nationality mix allowed the writer to gain much information from the group. They were comfortable in sharing personal as well as cultural experiences, and each was concerned that their employer be pleased with their productivity upon return to the professional setting. They were committed to making their programs stronger, to enhancing the quality of programs for future nonacademic students, and to improving the quality of life for children and youth.

The Council members were also pleased that they had been chosen to participate and help revamp the nonacademic training program. Though not planned at the outset of implementation, Council members were given certificates from the funding agency, signed by the Agency Administrator, certifying their membership and as a token of appreciation for the information they had shared and their dedication to the betterment of the nonacademic training program.

Summarily, the practicum verified for international nonacademic students what the literature had set forth. All stakeholders were involved, and information for better managerial decision making had been increased. Training

officers, placement contractors, training providers, and students all have more responsibility in ensuring that sufficient information is known about each course prior to selection; that students are programmed into the best course to meet their needs; that the course is an economically wise investment; that what is advertised is what is offered; and that students meet the required requirements for certified course completion. It was very important for a federal agency to go through this process of implementing a system to compare courses content and award credit for nonacademic training programs for international providers of child and youth services under federal sponsorship.

There were also some unanticipated results from this practicum which were very significant and deserve discussion.

A new relationship was fostered among stakeholders in the nonacademic training equation. This was important because it laid the foundation for people to work together and to expand the practicum concept to all students in nonacademic programs.

Even though the funding institution was paying the training placement contractors a sizable fee to find the most suitable courses to meet the defined training objectives of the individual students, there were many initial questions about the amount of extra work that would be necessary to ensure quality for nonacademic programs.

Stakeholders were forced to read the contractual language very carefully to determine the parameters of the latitude within contracts.

As more data were required on each nonacademic student who was an international provider of child and youth services, it became necessary for some contractors to reprogram their computer systems to add data files. The writer had not anticipated that the reprogramming would be as costly for each contractor as it became, so decisions were made on what data could be deleted. The compromise was that existing elements could be deleted, maintaining the same number of fields required.

There was initial opposition by placement contractors, based on the belief that a certificate that does not attach continuing education units should be just as useful as one which merely certified course completion. Students on the Council were very vocal as to what a certificate means in a developing country and the weight that it carries for future advancement.

The practice of only evaluating those nonacademic courses that had at least ten students sponsored by the funding agency revealed that some courses were deliberately held to less than ten students, in spite of a higher demand. Evaluations submitted by students had neither been systematically transferred to the funding agency nor used in determining the appropriateness of selected courses.

Certainly, this was a management issue that the funding agency has become sensitive to and will address.

Training officers in the regional bureaus were stakeholders in this process, as quality assurance for nonacademic programs and granting continuing education units would allow them to have additional training unit per dollar spent information for budget hearings. Their involvement in the training process had been basically tangential, but they became more interested as they felt they had a role to play in determining the future of the nonacademic training program.

Establishment of the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council was an asset to the practicum implementation. The benefits were far greater than what had initially been envisioned by the writer. Having students from different regions of the world enrolled in different courses interacting for this purpose allowed them an opportunity to work with and get to know each other. Had it not been for this Council, the chances are quite slim that they would have met or had an opportunity to mingle.

The Student Nonacademic Advisory Council bonded as individuals, not just Council members. They arranged to meet and invited one another to activities their respective classes were having. Additionally, they attended cultural events and religious services together.

Council members recognized the group environment as

"safe," and were therefore able to ask questions about America and experiences others had. As practicum implementation took place in a large, urban environment which covered more than one state, questions on free speech in a democratic setting, law enforcement and crime, race relations, international economic posture, and perceptions of foreigners were uppermost in the minds of Council members. These topics were discussed openly and students felt that they would leave America knowing more about the country than they would had they just taken the prescribed course and nothing more. This was a major secondary benefit of the practicum.

Council members were also able to learn about other countries and how students were selected for training. They had suggestions to take back to their countries on establishing better student selection processes in their own institutions, as well as learning more about the selected courses prior to accepting enrollment.

Three of the Council members would not have selected the courses they were in if they had been given more information prior to having to make a decision. They felt that having the opportunity to be trained in America was an honor, but that the more related the course to actual or planned job responsibilities, the better for immediate utilization of new knowledge. They were most vocal about

expanding the available course information prior to having to make a commitment.

The Student Nonacademic Advisory Council provided valuable input for revamping the nonacademic training program. They considered issues covering the full range of training: student selection to utilization of new skills upon return to the work setting. They were flexible in looking at the process, and abandoned some of their original ideas as implementation proceeded. Their input was integral to highlighting other areas of the training program that need to be addressed.

Implementation of this practicum also provided a reason for the central training staff to focus on the nonacademic training program. Expansion of the nonacademic training program had not received the attention necessary to ensure that quality was being maintained. As new countries received development assistance, it was of utmost importance to train people quickly and get them back into their countries to assume broader responsibilities. This became a driving force and quality assurance had become secondary without people realizing what had happened.

The practicum also highlighted that programming agents were adhering strictly to the terms of the contracts which stated that only courses with ten or more students must be evaluated. This meant that the funding agency was getting little feedback from some nonacademic students, and that

some courses were not being evaluated at all. Evaluations were, however, completed by these students but they were remaining with the programming agents.

The concept that the training program concentrates on educating world leaders was very important. Students are selected on the basis of showing that they could benefit from the program; they are not chosen based on prior academic performance. This became very important for the nonacademic training program as people are actually under more pressure to come to America, make a social and cultural adjustment, and learn prescribed material in a relatively short period of time. This indicated that extreme care must be taken in student selection by employers and the funding agency. This factor had not been one that the writer had originally thought needed to be addressed, as she had taken this as a given.

Finally, the practicum highlighted that students are indeed proud to be chosen to be educated in America, and they want formal recognition for their training. Certificates carry different meaning in different countries, and should be given to recognize and add credibility to the nonacademic training program. When students know that they will have international transcripts established, they are more likely to want to be lifelong learners and add courses to that transcript.

Recommendations

There are several recommendations to strengthen this program.

1. Be sure that the political environment is known prior to seeking to make global programmatic changes. Working in a federal system is extremely difficult when there has been a recent change in party leadership at the presidential level. It takes quite some time for political appointments to be made in federal agencies, and many people in acting positions choose not to make decisions.

2. Implementation should not cross fiscal years. The budget crises are amplified at the end of fiscal years because of commitments, and at the beginning of fiscal years because of the slow budgeting process.

3. Try to have more students visit with the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council so that they can also take the message of the importance of nonacademic training back to their countries.

4. Have a management team ready to address unexpected events as they surface. As problems with nonacademic training are learned, it is not

advantageous to postpone addressing them in favor of continuing with the problem solving experience at hand. This erroneously sends the message to placement contractors that all problems are not important, or that the funding agency is not interested enough in the program to assign attention to newly surfaced issues.

5. Maintain contact with students on the Student Nonacademic Advisory Council throughout their training program and when they return to their countries.

6. Do not implement an activity when contractors may be entering an open competition for a new contract. This creates false cooperation until the contract is let, and breeds hard feelings when the contract is awarded to a company in the group.

7. Be familiar with the different terms and conditions of all contracts involved prior to implementation. This will save time when questions arise on the legalities of changes and will help determine what is really a change and what is following the existing contractual obligation.

8. Have a computerized tracking system with sufficient data storage capacity to record all required information.

9. Visit overseas missions to interview training officers and host country counterparts. Have questionnaires written in the first language of those providing the information as opposed to the first language of the problem solver.

Dissemination

At the time the report was written, the writer had shared the results in separate meetings with stakeholders: training officers, placement contractors, training providers, and some students. The findings will also be presented at regional meetings throughout the year of training officers stationed in overseas posts.

The findings had also been shared with training officers from three other donor institutions in America and two foreign donors.

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APPENDIX A

NONACADEMIC TRAINING PROGRAM ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRES

Program Administrator's Questions

BACKGROUND & PROGRAM

1. What is the name of the training program this group is completing in the U.S.?

2. When did this program begin and when will it end?

3. What is the name of the U.S. institution in which the program was given?

4. What is the country of citizenship of the participants?

5. How many participants are in the group?

Orientations:

Missions_____ Provider_____ Training Facility_____

Other_____

Technical Training:

Classrooms_____ Training Tours_____

On-the-Job Training_____ Other_____

Experience America

Sightseeing_____ Homestays_____
Community Activities_____ Home Hospitality_____
Historically Black College/University_____
Other_____

Other Activities

English Language Training_____ Other_____

Open Ended Group Questions-Programmer Administered

1. Participants suggestions about the information they received in their home country.

2. Trips that the participants considered most useful to the training.

3. Trips that the participants considered in need of improvements.

4. Problems with transportation, money allowances, or housing.

5. Things that the participants did NOT get to see or do in the United States.

6. Free time activities the participants enjoyed most.

7. The most important new ideas gained about life and the people in the United States.

External Group Ratings-Programmer Administered

1. How well did the group get along with each other?

2. How realistic were the participants' expectations about your program?

3. How motivated was the group to learn what you taught?

4. How appropriate were the participants' backgrounds/experience?

5. How much did the group learn?

6. How well has the group adjusted to living in the U.S.?

7. How satisfied are you with administrative support?

8. Any comments or recommendations about the group or program:

9. How much did the members of the group participate in answering the questions?

   1 = Too much participation, discussion chaotic
   2 = Excellent participation, everyone involved
   3 = Good participation, most members involved
   4 = Adequate participation, some leaders answer questions
   5 = Inadequate participation, a few individuals answer most questions
   6 = Poor participation, one or two individuals answer all the time
   7 = No participation, little or no discussion, only voting

10. How well did the group understand the questions?

11. How well did the group get along with each other at the interview?

12. How much confidence do you have in the results of the interview?

13. Any comments that will help us better understand this group and the information provided.

NONACADEMIC STUDENT EXIT QUESTIONNAIRE

YOUR RESPONSES TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE ANONYMOUS AND USED ONLY TO ASSESS YOUR PROGRAM AND HELP IMPROVE PROGRAMS FOR FUTURE STUDENTS!

1. Regional Nationality:

   African_____
   Asian_____
   European_____
   Latin American/Caribbean_____
   Near Eastern _____

2. Sex: Male _____ Female_____

3. Age: <25_____ 25-27_____ 28-30_____
   31-33_____ 34-36_____ >36_____

4. Marital Status: Single_____ Separated_____
   Divorced_____ Widowed_____

5. Educational Level: High School Diploma_____
   BS/BA_____ MA/MS_____
   Ed.D./Ph.D._____

6. Length of Program:

7. Have you had prior training outside your country?
   Yes_____ No_____

8. Have you visited the USA before this trip?
   Yes_____ No_____

9. Are you employed? Yes_____ No_____

10. If employed, by whom?
    Government _____
    Parastatal _____
    University _____
    Private Company _____
    Other_____ (Please specify)

11. How important were your educational and professional qualifications to selection for this program?

    Very Important Not Important
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. How important were the needs of your job to selection for this program?

Very Important Not Important
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. How important were your personal contacts to selection for this program?

Very Important Not Important
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. Did you attend orientation before coming to the USA?
Yes_____ No_____

15. Which of the following did you want additional information about?

Goals of the training program _____
Program content _____
Program description _____
Program location _____
Other (Please specify)

16. Did you attend an orientation in the USA?
Yes_____ No_____

17. If so, please rate its usefulness.

Very Useful Not Useful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. Did you meet your programmer? Yes_____ No_____

19. Was your knowledge of English sufficient to allow you to understand class discussions?

No problems____ Some problems_____ Many Problems_____

20. Was your knowledge of English sufficient to allow you to understand informal conversations?

No problems____ Some problems_____ Many Problems_____

21. Was your knowledge of English sufficient to allow you to take adequate class notes?

No problems____ Some problems_____ Many Problems_____

22. What was your understanding of English sufficient in the use of technical vocabulary?

No problems____ Some problems_____ Many Problems_____

23. How important was your desire to increase your general knowledge in your field a determining factor in you taking this training program?

Very Important Not Important
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. How important was your desire to make professional contacts in the USA a determining factor in you taking this training program?

Very Important Not Important
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. How important to you is having a certificate of completion to your participation in the program?

Very Important Not Important
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. Did you receive a certificate of completion?
Yes_____ No_____

27. Is it important to your employer that you have an official certificate when you return home to prove that your completed a training program in America?

Very Important Not Important
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

28. Please explain why or why not.

29. How important was improving your ability to contribute to the development of your country a determining factor in your participation in this training program?

Very Important Not Important
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

30. How important was getting a new or different job in your home country to your participation in the training program?

Very Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not Important

31. Did you have any training outside the classroom?

Yes_____ No_____

32. How did you feel about the amount of time allocated to classroom training?

Too much _____ Adequate _____ Too little _____

33. How did you feel about the amount of time allocated to training outside the classroom?

Too much _____ Adequate _____ Too little _____

34. How applicable was your program to your previous training and experience?

Very Applicable 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not Applicable

35. How applicable was your training to your home country conditions?

Very Applicable 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not Applicable

36. How applicable was your training to your personal career plans?

Very Applicable 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not Applicable

37. If you were employed, how long do you plan to remain in your present job?

<3-6 months ____ <8-12 months___ > year_____
NA _____

38. As a part of your job, will you teach students when you return home?

Yes_____ No_____

If so, what age group? <5 years_____

5-10 years_____ 11-15 years_____

16-18 years_____ Over 18 years_____

39. Did you participate in your "experience America" program?

Yes _____ No _____

40. Will you have the same job when you return home?

Yes_____ No_____

41. Will your job responsibilities change as a result of your training?

Yes_____ No_____

42. Please indicate your "Experience America" activities.

Community affairs _____
Sightseeing_____
Visits with American families_____
Group social activities_____

43. Please list any activities you wanted to participate in but did not.

44. Why did you not participate in these activities?

45. Did you make any formal presentations about life or activities in your home country to American citizens?

Yes_____ No_____

46. Did you make any informal presentations about life or activities in your home country to American citizens?

Yes_____ No_____

47. Did you experience discrimination while in America?

Yes_____ No_____

48. How do you evaluate your allowance for housing?

Adequate_____ Not adequate_____

49. How do you evaluate your allowance for food?

Adequate_____ Not adequate_____

50. How do you evaluate your allowance for books and materials?

Adequate_____ Not adequate_____

51. Did you use your health and accident coverage insurance?

Yes _____ No_____

52. If so, where were medical services rendered?

Hospital_____ Clinic_____
Office_____
Were follow-up visits needed?

Yes_____ No_____

53. Did you have unprotected sexual intercourse during this training program?

Yes_____ No_____

54. Rate the groups with which you feel you will have most problems upon re-entry into your country, and list what those problems will most likely be. (1 is the highest)

_____Family

_____Friends

_____Employer

_____Colleagues

_____Other (please specify)

55. Will your community responsibilities change as a result of your training?

Yes_____ No_____

56. Will your family responsibilities change as a result of your training?

Yes_____ No_____

57. As a part of your community service, will you teach students when you return home?

Yes_____ No_____

If so, what age group?

5-10 years_____ 11-15 years_____

16-18 years_____ Over 18 years_____

58. To what extent do your foresee having problems when you return home due to resistance by people to changing ways of doing things?

No problems____ Some problems_____
Many Problems_____

59. Would you recommend your training programs to others?

Yes _____ No_____

60. What would you change about your training program?

61. Did your training program meet your expectations?

Fully met Did not meet
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

62. Did your training program meet your professional need?

Fully met Did not meet
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

63. Overall, were you satisfied with your training?

Satisfied Not satisfied
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

64. Was your training program what was advertised?

Yes _____
With slight modifications_____
With many modifications_____
No_____

65. Suggestions for improvement in the overall training program.

Comments:

APPENDIX B

NONACADEMIC STUDENT INFORMATION FORM

Nonacademic Student Information Form

NAME OF PROVIDER: _____

ADDRESS: _____
_____

TELEPHONE: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

COURSE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

DATES OFFERED: _____

COST:

TUITION _____

HOUSING _____

MATERIALS AND FEES _____

NUMBER OF STUDENT CONTACT TRAINING HOURS: _____